

This guide will assist you in tracing your American Indian genealogy. Genealogy is very important to Indian people today as ancestry must be documented for health, education and other benefits.

Some state and federal laws and programs require 1/4 American Indian blood or more to qualify. Each tribe establishes their own enrollment criteria. It is a misconception that all people possessing American Indian blood will receive tribal funds. Not all tribes have funds to distribute. In order to be eligible to share in assets owned by a tribe you must be a recognized and enrolled member.

You are about to begin an exciting, interesting and educational pursuit. Consider yourself the beginning twig on the vast family tree. Start with yourself and work toward the unknown past.



Michigan Department of Civil Rights
110 West Michigan Ave, Ste. 800
Lansing, MI 48933
Phone (517) 335-3165
Fax (517) 241-0546

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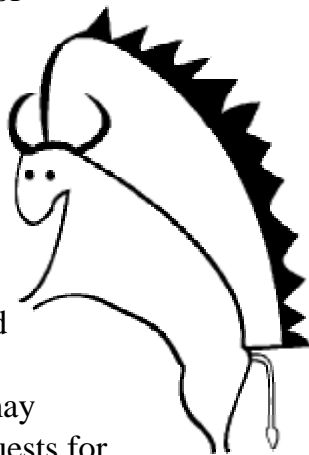
1. Begin the process by filling out the attached family tree chart to the best of your ability.

Going back three generations is usually sufficient; yourself, your parents and your grandparents. Obtaining copies of birth and death certificates for these relatives can assist by providing missing names on your family tree chart. These documents can be obtained through the county clerk's office or vital records office where your family members were born or died.

2. It is important to know your tribal affiliation; Ottawa, Chippewa, Potawatomi, etc.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, may be able to confirm or identify your tribal affiliation if it is a **Michigan** tribe. If it is not a Michigan Tribe, the Michigan Bureau will direct you to the appropriate Bureau of Indian Affairs Office.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs' (BIA) area offices throughout the United States can do an initial free search, assist in determining blood quantum level and identify the tribe(s) in which you may be eligible to enroll. Requests for assistance should be accompanied by a cover letter requesting assistance, a



family tree and copies of birth and death certificates demonstrating your relationships on the family tree chart. Send **Michigan** tribal affiliation requests to:

**Bureau of Indian Affairs/Michigan Agency
2901.5 I-75 Business Spur
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-6809**

(Note: You may be eligible to enroll in more than one tribe. If so, you need to determine which tribe you are interested in enrolling in based on services available, location and family history values. You cannot enroll in more than one federally recognized tribe.)

3. Contact the tribal certifier or enrollment office and request their application forms. Follow their instructions.

4. Tribes will certify you upon confirming your blood line with their tribal records, including treaty and annuity rolls, etc.

It may be helpful to indicate if other family members are already members of the tribe. The tribal office will notify you if you need to submit more information.

5. In cases of adoption, the Bureau of Indian Affairs will do third party requests to obtain ethnic information from your records and assist you with your tribal certification.

6. It is very important to keep copies of all your Indian ancestry information and photocopy whenever possible.

How to Get Started on Your Family Research

Using the attached family tree, begin with yourself and work back to your parents, grandparents and so on. Write their full names, maiden names, tribal affiliation, other names they are known by, brothers and sisters, dates or approximate dates and places of birth, marriage and death.

This sequence will help you save time:

Step 1 - Home Sources:

- ◆ Talk with immediate family
- ◆ Check family records

See how much of the family tree chart you can fill in using home sources. Home sources include the following:

Baby Books
 Diaries, journals and letters
 Certificates of birth, marriage and death
 Marriage announcements
 Church records
 Memorial cards
 Military records
 Family Bibles
 Medical records
 Previous family tree charts
 Newspaper clippings
 Family traditions
 School records
 Identified family photo albums
 Scrapbooks
 Information from immediate family

Step 2 - Contact Relatives:

- ◆ Talk with other relatives
- ◆ Check on research or tribal certifications previously done by other family members

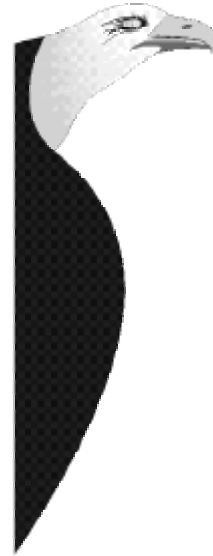
Ask relatives to help you fill in the blank spots on your family tree. Many times, the relative you wish to contact lives far away and must be contacted by letter or telephone. Ask the relative for the information you hope they can provide. Asking for “everything you know” may be too general, so try to be specific. You may only want direct line ancestry information and not all relatives in general. A self-addressed, stamped

envelope or telephone number to call collect may facilitate a quicker response and allow older family members to answer your questions more easily.

It is very important that you take the time to talk to your relatives on both sides of your family, preferably in person and starting with the oldest relatives. Often they can give a wealth of information.

Take notes during your visits and telephone calls. Find out where they lived, the relationships or bloodlines, what tribe and clan, when they moved to different places, if they married and who, date of birth, if they belonged to a church, if they served in the military, what their maiden name was, etc. If exact dates are not known get approximate dates to narrow it down. Also, get the addresses and/or telephone numbers of other living relatives.

Concentrate on direct blood line to save time, i.e., parents, grandparents, great grandparents, etc. If you are doing a complete family history you may want to research your cousins, aunts, uncles and their children. Also, knowledge of these family members may be helpful in tracking down your bloodlines. If the



blood degree is known indicate that on the family tree chart also. After your visit begin filling in the blanks of your family tree chart. Always record your source of information and date it.

Evaluate the information you have after each visit and decide what is still missing on the chart and plan your next research activity accordingly. To save time keep a list of things to do. When you have free time check your list and do one of the things on it. This saves having to check back through all your notes and trying to remember what you should do next.

Step 3 - Vital Records:

- ◆ Obtain vital records, i.e., birth, death and marriages certificates.

These records were usually recorded at the county level and are available at the:

State Vital Records Office
3423 N. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd
Lansing, Michigan 48909



You may call (517) 335-8656 to get a recording that will tell you how to order these by mail. You may also go directly to the Lansing office and pick up the forms or check their website at:
www.michigan.gov/mdch. They will be able to provide you with the phone number and addresses of other states' vital records offices.

Step 4 - Visit Libraries and Other Sources:

- ♦ Visit Libraries, genealogical groups, etc.
- ♦ Contact depositories containing Indian genealogy information

To further assist you with your research on your family tree, a visit to a large library would be beneficial. The librarian will be able to direct you to the library's American Indian Records.

The following records are available for you to trace your family names back to these documents:

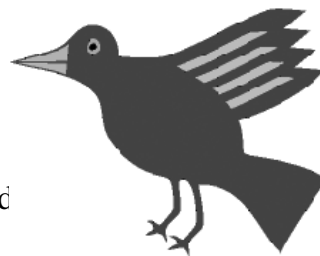
- ♦ Annuity and treaty rolls
- ♦ Census rolls: 1910, 1900, 1890 are indexed; give names, ages and location of birth

- ♦ Military and tax rolls
- ♦ Land and allotment records
- ♦ Indian agent reports and field notes
- ♦ Indian school records
- ♦ Indian cemeteries - provides information before the state kept records. Check with cemetery keepers.
- ♦ County records: Deeds and Wills
- ♦ Missionary records

The libraries in Michigan with extensive American Indian genealogical collections are:

- ♦ Bently Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor*
- ♦ Burton Collection, Detroit Public Library, Detroit*
- ♦ Central Michigan University, Mt. Pleasant*
- ♦ Flint Public Library, Flint
- ♦ Grand Rapids Public Library, Grand Rapids*
- ♦ Hoyt Public Library, Saginaw
- ♦ Library of Michigan, Lansing*
- ♦ Michigan State University, East Lansing

*Libraries which have the Durant Roll available for viewing.



There are many other libraries with smaller collections. These libraries will assist and refer you upon request. You may write or call them and request assistance. They are:

- ♦ Bay City Public Library, Bay City
- ♦ Bayliss Library, Sault Ste. Marie
- ♦ Bishop Baraga Archives, Marquette
- ♦ Grace A. Dow Library, Midland
- ♦ Hackley Public Library, Holland
- ♦ Kalamazoo Public Library
- ♦ Mark Osterlin Library, Northwestern Michigan College, Traverse City
- ♦ Monroe County Library, Monroe
- ♦ Owosso Public Library, Owosso

Another major source of information is your local genealogical association, which is a group of researchers with a common interest in family research. They exchange information, teach beginning classes and hold informational workshops. To locate a society or professional genealogist by county contact your library or check the Library of Michigan at:

www.michigan.gov/hal

Click on the GENEALOGISTS link listed near the bottom of the page.

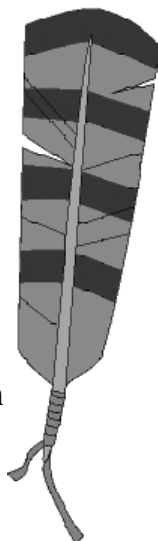
Some Final Tips

♦ Some time during the middle 1800s, many Indian people took English names for various reasons. You will notice that within the same family, brothers and sisters were given different last names. Also remember when names were written down by others, there could be misspellings.

♦ A genealogical rule to remember is to write dates by day, month and year. Always spell out the month by a three letter abbreviation and write out the year, as usually you will be working with more than one century. For example, 2/6/34 may mean February 6 or June 2 or 1934 or 1834, etc. Whereas 2 Jun 1834 leaves no doubt as to what is meant. Always separate two sets of numbers by a written word.

♦ Use a pencil as you work on your family tree chart and black ink for the final copy when the information is “proven.” Blue ink is not permanent.

♦ Information is considered a primary source when photocopied. This also eliminates errors that occur when information is hand copied.



Depositories Containing Records of American Indian Genealogy

**U.S. Department of Interior Bureau of
Indian Affairs/Michigan Agency
2901.5 I-75 Business Spur
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
(906) 632-6809**

**Library and Archives Canada
Researcher Services/Genealogy Unit
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0N3
(613) 996-7458**

**National Archives and Records Center
700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20408
(202) 501-5400**

**National Archives - Great Lakes Region
7358 S. Pulaski Road
Chicago, Illinois 60629
(773) 948-9000**

**Smithsonian Institute
National Anthropological Archives
900 Jefferson Drive, SW
Washington, D.C. 20560
(202) 357-1420**

**Library of Congress
101 Independence Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20540-4172
(202) 707-5000**

**Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter Day Saints*
Genealogical Department
35 N. West Temple
Salt Lake City, Utah 84150
(801) 240-2331**

**Military Service Records
National Personnel Records Center
9700 Page Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63132**

**They have records prior to state records. Even if records were destroyed by fire, etc. they may be available here. They also have early Canadian census data.*

This is only a general guide to help you in the initial gathering of family information. We have only listed a few sources to get you started. Researching genealogy is like being a detective and solving a mystery, and it can become a very interesting and fascinating pursuit. Good Luck!

Date: _____
Source Information: _____

Applicant: _____
AKA: _____
Tribe: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____
Bro. & Sis.: _____

Spouse: _____
Children _____

Researched by: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____
Copies provided to: _____

KEY
AKA: Also known as DOB: Date of birth DOM: Date of Marriage DOD: Date of death

Father: _____
AKA: _____
Tribe: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____
Bro. & Sis.: _____

Mother: _____
AKA: _____
Tribe: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____
Bro. & Sis.: _____

Grandfather: _____
AKA: _____
Tribe: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____
Bro. & Sis.: _____

Grandmother: _____
AKA: _____
Tribe: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____
Bro. & Sis.: _____

Grandfather: _____
AKA: _____
Tribe: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____
Bro. & Sis.: _____

Grandmother: _____
AKA: _____
Tribe: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____
Bro. & Sis.: _____

GGF: _____
AKA: _____
DOB: _____ Place: _____
DOM: _____ Place: _____

GGM: _____
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